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ABSTRACT

The history of training programs for student services professionals is reviewed. As higher education meets with changes in social issues and student characteristics, student services professionals have had to improve the quality of the educational experience, attract new student groups, and retain students. In 1980, some professional associations formed the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs (CAS), whose goal was to produce standards and guidelines to develop and assess programs for professional preparation at the master's degree level. The development of the recommended standards is reviewed through a comparison to the master's program in student services at the University of Arizona and a curricular analysis. Specific training for student services professionals is traced from its beginnings in 1916 in a course for advisors of women students, through the publication in 1937 of the landmark document entitled "The Student Personnel Point of View," to various professional association statements in the 1960s and 1970s. The current CAS Standards represent areas of performance related to effective practice, and they define characteristics of programs, recognizing student development, administration, and counseling. The review of the curriculum according to the CAS Standards indicates that the University of Arizona offers coursework in each of the recommended areas. The Conrad Pratt Curricular Decision Making Model is applied to the development of the Standards. The recommendations of the Standards are reflected in the curricula for student services professionals at the University of Arizona, though not in a prescriptive manner. A broad sample of institutions may be examined to determine if programs at other institutions match the Standards more closely. Though the Council represents progress toward development of standards within the student services profession, there is a need for further work. Contains 18 references. (SM)

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Educating Student Personnel Administrators: Recommended Standards and the University of Arizona Master's Program

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Running Head: EDUCATING STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS

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Abstract

The study reviews the history of training programs for student services professionals. It introduces the curricular recommendations of the Council for the Advancement of Standards and Guidelines for Student Services/Development Programs. The study examines the development of the Standards through a comparison to the Master's program in Student Services at the University of Arizona and a curricular analysis. The Conrad and Pratt Curricular Decision Making Model is applied to the development of the Standards. Suggestions are made for further research on the Standards.

Educating Student Personnel Administrators: Recommended Standards and the University of Arizona Master's Program

Higher Education is confronted with changes in social issues and student characteristics which institutions must address. Efforts of student services professionals toward improving the quality of the educational experience, attracting new student groups, and retaining students have become critical to institutions. This expanded role for student services requires examination of the preparation and development of professionals in the field. In recognition of the importance of training programs the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), along with 19 other professional associations, formed the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs (CAS) in 1980. This group has produced standards and guidelines to develop and assess programs for professional preparation at the Master's degree level.

The purpose of this study is to review the development of the recommended Standards through a comparison to the Master's program in Student Services at the University of Arizona and a curricular analysis. Suggestions for further research are made based on the findings. This study does not measure what occurs in class settings or examine the program further than a comparison to the CAS Standards.

Specific training for student services professionals first dealt with issues surrounding women students. The first course taught was, possibly, "Problems for Advisors of Women and Girls" at the Teacher's College of Columbia University in 1916 (Miller and Carpenter, 1980, p. 181). In 1934 Syracuse University offered a "Course for Advisers of Girls and Deans of Women" (Sandeen, 1982). Three years later the Executive Committee of the American Council on Education convened a conference to discuss:

> ...the need for further investigation of certain fundamental problems related to the clarification of so-called personnel work, the intelligent use of available tools, and the development of additional techniques and processes (ACE, 1937).

The result of this meeting was The Student Personnel Point of View, which is considered today as the landmark document of the student affairs profession. The report identifies values in the field and delineates services within the profession. Though it does not address training, it defines areas in which a student affairs professional must work and, by implication, be trained.

In 1949 C. Gilbert Wrenn, a member of the 1937 conference, reviewed the status of student services professionals. His work was followed by Williamson (1958) who first suggested an outline for professional preparation. In the following decade professional associations, an area identified in the 1937 report,

issued statements describing programs to prepare for student personnel work. Emmet (1963) published a guide to various training programs and a Commission on Professional Development was organized for the Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education (COSPA, 1965). The result of the Commission's work was the COSPA Proposal, addressing professional preparation.

In 1966 the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) appointed a committee to examine the preparation of student personnel workers. Three years later O'Banion (1969) identified core areas preparation programs should address and Tracy (1971) followed with a review of the status of Master's programs. Penn (1974) suggested establishing an accrediting body to improve the quality of professional development, while Arner (1976) proposed a "process-outcome" model, and Knock (1977) offered perspectives on preparation of student services professionals.

In recent years, discussion has continued on professional preparation programs. Miller and Carpenter (1980) and Delworth and Hanson (1980, pp. 181-198) have presented curricular proposals. Canon (1984) discussed developmental tasks for the profession and Shaffer (1984) identified future trends and areas professionals will have to address. A result of this interest was the formation of the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) to produce standards and guidelines for student services development programs at the Master's degree level (ACPA, 1986).

The CAS Standards were determined by a concensus of leaders in the student services field. They represent areas of performance related to effective practice and are intended to define characteristics of programs. The Standards recognize three dimensions of student services practice: student development, administration, and counseling. They also suggest programs may be designed by combining the dimensions. Within the three dimensions eleven specified areas of coursework are prescribed. Users are cautioned not to be rigid in their interpretation and to utilize creative approaches (CAS, 1986).

Using the CAS Standards as the organizing principle the Student Services Master's Program requirements, options, and course descriptions at the University of Arizona were reviewed. A chart comparing the coursework in each specified content area of the CAS Standards is presented in Chart 1. The chart reports Program/Standard relationships in three ways: required courses analogous to a Standard are listed; analogous courses offered in the academic division, but not required in the program, are listed as optional; when courses analogous to a Standard are not offered the area is listed as an elective. Electives, therefore, indicate areas where coursework reflecting a Standard must be selected from other departments.

insert chart 1 about here

Review of the curriculum by the Standards indicates that the University of Arizona offers coursework in each of the recommended areas, though many classes pertaining to the Standards are optional choices within the degree program. This indicates a student may progress through the program and be very well prepared in one of the CAS Dimensions. It is also possible for a student to experience a cross section of classes and have knowledge in each of the areas. Preparation of the student affairs professional is thus dependent upon the student's focus and the advising they receive, though it is difficult for a student not to receive instruction in at least one area of the Standards.

Since the Master's program at the University of Arizona does not require selection of or preparation in any specific one of the recommended areas it is instructive to examine the developmental process of the Standards. Conrad and Pratt (1983) suggest a model for curriculum analysis which, though primarily designed to address undergraduate programs, lends itself to this purpose. The model flows from Environmental Input, through Content and Form, to Outcomes. It is also possible to examine the University of Arizona's Master's program through this process. Since the focus of this study is student services professional education as recommended by the Standards, the Standards are reviewed.

Environmental Inputs are the first stage of the Conrad and Pratt curricular decision making process. They represent ingredients curriculum planners manipulate to suit their needs.

The Inputs are divided into three areas: societal factors, institutional characteristics, and student culture (Conrad and Pratt, 1983). The societal factors are expressed throughout the development of the Standards. In response to a perceived need professional associations formed the CAS and leaders in the student services profession were involved in the development of the Standards. As such, the Standards reflect areas where practitioners in the field believe training is necessary.

The manner in which the CAS provides for institutional characteristics is to permit flexibility and creativity in the application of the Standards.

Student culture, the third area of Environmental Input, is the focus of the professional field and response to this area will permeate any degree program.

Within the model Environmental Inputs are major determinants of the content areas. The twelve content areas specified by the Standards reflect the focus of the profession. Unlike the model, however, the Standards are not linear. There is no suggested sequence to the coursework either between or within the content areas. It cannot be assumed from this that there is not structure to the knowledge within the profession. Instead, it is an area where the Standards allow for institutional characteristics and creativity to structure the coursework.

The model divides the form of curricular content into two areas: organizational and instructional. The organization of the

curriculum provides insight to the CAS concept of the structure of the knowledge. The Standards address this by dividing the student services profession in three thematic dimensions: student development, administration, and counseling. They imply a degree of structure in the knowledge by identifying areas believed common to each dimension. Instructional vehicles are not addressed, those decisions are left to the institution. Recognition of practical or experiential aspects of instruction is provided in the suggested area of specialized courses where practicums and internships are recommended.

Outcomes are the final portion of the model and are also viewed in two areas: curricular and educational. In the CAS Standards outcomes for both areas are implicit. The curricular outcomes of the model are intended not only to reflect, but also to guide the process. The implied curricular process of the Standards is to integrate theory and practice. Educational outcomes are the results of the curricular process. The implied educational outcomes are to produce effective student services professionals. The continuing review and evaluation of the Standards by CAS is intended to insure the effectiveness of suggested content areas.

Critique of the Standards can be made only in their translation to practice. The Conrad and Pratt Model indicates that the procedural method of development of the Standards was appropriate, although the University of Arizona example shows

their application to be too lenient. Weaknesses in the Standards result from their intentional flexibility. To correct weaknesses the Standards must become more rigid in their prescriptions. This, in turn, will impact the number of institutions willing to accept the Standards in their curricular process.

This study has shown the recommendations of the Standards are reflected in the curricula for student services professionals at the University of Arizona, though not in a prescriptive manner. This leaves questions for further research regarding the Standards and their use. First, their utility is questionable if institutions do not translate the recommendations to requirements. A broad sample of institutions may be examined to determine if programs at other institutions match the Standards more closely. Second, a study can be performed of leading institutions in the field to learn whether it is their curricula, faculty, or institutional reputation that contributes to their prominence. If their prominence is determined by their curricula, then the curriculum content can be examined further for indicators of quality to which the Standards may then be compared.

The actions of the past 50 years since the writing of The Student Personnel Point of View document the birth of, and show the need for, student services professionals. Through an evaluation of the CAS Standards for student services training programs it is shown that classes relevant to the recommendations are available at the University of Arizona, though their

application is dependent upon student choice and advising. Though the Council represents progress towards development of standards within the student services profession, this study illustrates the need for further work. As institutions and society change it will be necessary for the profession to change as well.

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Chart 1
Comparison of Recommendations by the Council for the Advancement of Standards to the University of Arizona Master's Program

Council Recommendations			University of Arizona Master's Program	
Dimensions	Coursework Areas	Status	Department and Number	Course Title
Student Development Dimension	College Student and College Environment	Optional	H ED 602	The College Student
	Helping Relationship & Career Development	Elective	COUN 601 & COUN 631	Foundations of Counseling Career Counseling
Administrative Dimension	Administration	Elective	Many Options	in Educational Administration (ED A) Management and Policy (MAP) Departments
	Performance Appraisal and Supervision	Elective	Many Options	in Educational Administration (ED A) or Management and Policy (MAP) Departments
	Administrative Use of Computers	Optional	EDFA 487 or EDFA 488	Microcomputers in Education Microcomputer Application in Education
Counseling Dimension	Group Counseling	Elective	COUN 683	Group Counseling
	Appraisal of the Individual	Elective	COUN 622	Appraisal of the Individual
Areas Common To Each Dimension	Human Development Theory and Practice	Optional	ED P 600 or PSYC 414	Theories of Human Development Personality and Social Development
	Higher Education and Student Affairs	Optional	H ED 602 or H ED 617	Foundations of Student Personnel Work Student Personnel Services
	Research and Evaluation	Required	EDFA 560	Disciplined Inquiry in Education
	Organization Behavior and Development	Optional	H ED 609	Organization and Administration
	Specialized Courses	Required	Many Options	Student selects with advisor to define emphasis

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